

Hall's Corner Improvement

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The Economic Advisory Committee provided another update to the Board of Selectmen last week on their efforts to move forward with a Hall's Corner revitalization project, and this time they identified some quick fixes that will make the area safer and more attractive. Committee chairman John Bear and committee members presented a plan showing immediate, medium and longer term action items that will address the need to maintain and improve Hall's Corner as the center of Duxbury's business community.

Over the past year, the Economic Advisory Committee has discussed with selectmen two studies recently completed for the Hall's Corner business area by the Old Colony Planning Council and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council. These studies reviewed items such as traf

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fic, parking and the overall appearance of the area. They also suggested ways to make it continually attractive and viable to both existing and new businesses.

For the short term, Bear said there are many things the town can do immediately that will improve the area.

"There are a number of specific recommendations we thought should be implemented," Bear said.

For example, he said directional signs should be placed at the end of each of the five streets that come into the circle at Hall's Corner to show motorists which way to go.

"There's no signage at the rotary telling people which way to go," Bear said. According to the two studies of the area, the town should work to identify available public parking in Hall's Corner. Bear said that one idea that can be done immediately is to erect a large blue parking sign at the town-owned Girl Scout House on Washington Street. There is an empty lot there that is rarely used. Eliminating dangerous parking spots like the one in front of Duxbury Wine and Spirits on Washington Street is another short term action that can help the area. Another is to build what the committee calls "a curb bump-out" at the end of Standish Street to hold a stop sign. Many motorists entering the traffic circle from Standish Street either "disregard the stop sign completely or roll through it," Bear said. A new reflective stop sign that is obvious to motorists coming from that direction could help with the safety and traffic pattern in the area, he stated.

The final short term improvement is to have the town maintain the sidewalks, benches and trees that were currently in Hall's Corner and to fix or repair them if necessary.

"We need to maintain it to bring it up to where it is aesthetically pleasing," Bear said. One problem in the area with which the committee has been wrestling is the lack of a stop sign at the end of Chestnut Street. The committee was in agreement that a stop sign should be erected at Chestnut Street and understood that the town did not own property there on which to put a sign, but they had ideas on how this could still be accomplished. They offered these solutions: create an island in the road for a stop sign, buy some space from the Hall's Corner Store owner or ask for permission to place a sign on that property.

The longer term recommendations for the area were more complicated and included asking voters to approve funds for a consultant to determine the feasibility and financing of redeveloping Hall's Corner and creating an agency to oversee this type of project. Involving area property owners and local developers to see if buildings could be sold or improved to meet the goals of an improvement plan is another idea on the committee's list.

"We have an opportunity to enhance our only real business area and we have lots of data and seven very capable and committed committee members," said Bear.